U. S. PATENT APPLICATION

For

FASTENER FOR USE WITH SHOES

Inventor:

Gerard J. Tate

Background of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to fasteners for shoes, sneakers and boots, and more particularly to a simple, inexpensive, safe and fashionable substitute for shoe laces in which the shoes can be worn and taken off without the need to remove the fasteners of the present invention.

[0002] Since the inception of the use of inelastic lace for shoes, there have been numerous attempts at developing an easier and better way to fasten them.

[0003] There have been a number of attempts to combine various elements in order to arrive at an inexpensive, fashionable, easy to use system to fasten footwear to the user's foot.

[0004] Recent US patents do improve the art substantially but have flaws which the current invention overcomes.

[0005] The Gentry patent (4,733,439) uses a number of elastic strips, each of which have fasteners at both ends. Pins, rivets or hooks are used to hold the ends of the strips in the eyelets. The primary impediment to the Gentry reference is the difficulty of installation and ease in which the fasteners can work out of their attachments.

[0006] The Fortune reference (5,214,826) is more current and uses a system similar to Gentry but improves it. Fortune uses a cylindrical segment having a longitudinal appendage extending from it. The primary drawbacks of Fortune are that the longitudinal member cannot be changed

and the connection will be subject to release due to lateral and vertical pressures. In addition there is a minimal holding area for the longitudinal member.

Summary of the Invention

[0007] One of the objects of this invention is to propose a fastening device that delivers properly apportioned fastening tension.

[0008] Another object of this invention is to provide a device that is simple for the user to install and use.

[0009] Another object of this invention is to allow for a simple exchange of the longitudinal member for other colors or designs.

[0010] In the first embodiment, used primarily on running shoes, a lateral column type fabric holder is used for the standard laces. A hook like device as shown on Figure 1 is inserted in the interior of the cylindrical lace holder and the other end is inserted in the opposing cylindrical lace holder, each being connected with a rubberized or elasticized bungee of varying width, color and design. See Figure 1A.

[0011] In another embodiment for use in shoes, boots and sneakers with opposing circular eyelets, a first mating member having a thin cylindrical shaft with vertical apertures is inserted from the bottom through the circular eyelets in opposing eyelets. A second mating member with two ends separated by elastometric bungee of varying width, color or design is attached by

depressing the top of each end of the second mating member on the vertical shaft.

[0012] The mating members will be made of a resilient material.

Description of the Invention

[0013] With reference to the perspective view of Figure 2 there is shown a shoe with successive opposing cylindrical lace holders. Shown in position on such lace holders is the subject matter of the invention of the first embodiment.

[0014] With reference to the perspective view of Figure 7 there is shown a shoe having successive horizontal eyelets. Shown in position on such eyelets is the subject matter of the invention of the second embodiment.

[0015] With reference to Figure 3 from the top view, the noticeable external features of the invention for fastening shoes, sneakers and boots are the curved stop ends and the central segment of elastomeric material which can be ornamentally designed.

[0016] With reference to Figure 4a first mating member is illustrated which comprises an elongated curved segment having a covered longitudinal aperture sown as segment 5 extending partially through. An elastomeric shaft (segment 6) extends radially outwardly from the opposite end of the first mating member.

[0017] The internal portion of the first mating member contains a cavity in which the distal end of the vertical mounting post is inserted and the increased diameter segments of such vertical post will be engaged in the cavity of the first retaining member. Thus, the first retaining member is adapted to be engaged onto and over the enlarged segments of the vertical post.

[0018] Both retaining members should be made of a molded resilient plastic material.

[0019] A second mating member (Figure 7) consists of a vertical mounting post which extends from a cylindrical shaped flange. The vertical post will be of such diameter that it will fit securely through the eyelets in the shoe. The mounting post has a uniform diameter throughout its length except for two increased diameter segments (Segment 10 and 11) along its length. The purpose of such increased diameter segments is to secure the first mating member and the second mating member by the user pushing vertically on the top fo the first mating member. Once the cylindrical aperture (8)of the first mating member is installed on the mounting post of the second mating member, the first mating member will stay securely in place. However, by the exertion of vertical and lateral force, the two members may be separated without damage.

[0020] What has been discussed above is the preferred embodiment of the instant invention. It should be appreciated that the invention may be embodied otherwise than is herein specifically shown and described and within such embodiment, certain changes may be made in the form and arrangement fo the parts without departing from the underlying ideas or principles of this invention.